democratic State. The European Parliament in its Urgency Resolution Procedures adopted on 11th February 1999, a non-binding Resolution on religious freedom. While expressing anxiety about the increase in persecution of religious minorities in various countries, the Resolution also applauds PM's speech to the nation supporting freedom of religion and makes a call about bringing to justice the murderers of the Australian citizen and his two sons. The Australian Foreign Minister issued a statement conveying their Government's concern and sorrow.

Government of India has emphasised India's strong and continuing commitment to the maintenance of our long established tradition of religious tolerance and secularism. The statements of the President and Prime Minister of India condemning the recent incidents, as well as the widespread public condemnation of these events have also been brought to the attention of interlocutors in countries where concern has been expressed. In has further been emphasised that government is fully committed to safeguarding the right of all citizens to freedom of religion, and that this is enshrined in the Constitution. Government's prompt action to fully investigate and proceed under the law against all such acts of violence, and to preserve India's long tradition of peaceful co-existence and social harmony between people of different religious faiths has also been made known.

मध्य प्रदेश के लिए सूखा-राहत

49. **श्री बालकवि बैरागी:** क्या **प्रधान मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या मध्य प्रदेश का एक-तिहाई से अधिक भू-भाग सूखे से ग्रस्त है और राज्य के 26 से भी अधिक जिलों को राज्य सरकार द्वारा सूखा-ग्रस्त घोषित किया गया है;

(ख) इस संबंध में राज्य सरकार द्वारा सरकार से कितनी राशि की राहत/सहायता मांगी जा रही है; और

(ग) केन्द्र सरकार ने 1998-99 और 1999-2000 के वर्षों के लिए कितनी राशि की राहत/सहायता स्वीकृत करने का आश्वासन दिया है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य (श्री सोमपाल): (क) से (ग) मध्य प्रदेश सरकार ने एक ज्ञापन भेजा है जिसमें सूखे के कारण राष्ट्रीय आपदा राहत कोष (एन एफ सी आर) से 251.34 करोड़ रुपये की सहायता मांगी गई है। राज्य सरकार द्वारा बताया गया है कि राज्य के 7 जिलों में 33 तहसीलें सूखे से प्रभावित हुई हैं। राज्य सरकार द्वारा भेजे गए ज्ञापन पर राष्ट्रीय आपदा राहत कोष से सहायता के लिए स्थापित प्रक्रिया के अनुसार कार्यवाही की जा रही है। तथापि, आपदा राहत कोष के तहत 1998-99 के लिए राज्य सरकार को 56.65 करोड़ रुपये (42.49 करोड़ रुपये के केन्द्रीय अंश सहित) का आबंटन किया गया है और सम्पूर्ण केन्द्रीय हिस्से की निर्मुक्ति उन्हें पहले ही कर दी गई है।

Eighth Round of Indo-Us Talks

0. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the eighth round of Indo-US talks, recently, concluded in New Delhi;

(b) what kind of headway has been achieved in making new broad-based relationship between the two countries;

(c) the reasons that Government have failed to take into confidence the major political parties about the nature of talks exchanged;

(d) whether these talks had harmonised positions on CTBT; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) The recently held talks with the United States in New Delhi from 29—31 January, 1999 were in continuation of the dialogue initiated in June 1999. The talks are being conducted on the basis of comprehensive proposals that India put forward on disarmament and non-

proliferation matters, namely a unilateral moratorium on explosive nuclear tests, willingness to discuss converting it into a dejure obligation, decision to enter into constructive negotiations on the FMCT and reaffirming our policies on stringent control on export of sensitive technologies.

After several rounds, the talks had narrowed and now focussed on the four issues namely, CTBT, FMCT, Export Controls and Defence Posture.

Both delegations have expressed satisfaction over the outcome of the talks. As in earlier meetings, the security perspectives of the two sides were further clarified with a view to harmonising respective perspectives.

(b) Both sides recognised that the purpose of the talks is to lay the foundation of the broad-based relationship between India and the United States. In his correspondence with the Prime Minister, the President of the United States of America has expressed his desire for a broad-based relationship that befits the largest democracies of the world. We have reciprocated these sentiments. Such a broad-based relationship will include cooperation in a range of areas such as trade and investment, science and technology, defence, academics and culture.

(c) Government has regularly consulted various leaders of political parties. The Prime Minister made a statement on the talks with the United States in Parliament on 15th December, 1998. These aspects have also been discussed in the meetings of the Standing Committee as well as Consultative Committee of Parliament.

(d) and (e) India has stated that it remains committed to converting its voluntary moratorium on underground nuclear explosive tests into a de jure obligation. The Prime Minister stated in the UN General Assembly on 24th September, 1998 that "India is now engaged in discussions with our interlocutors on a range of issues, including the CTBT. We are prepared to bring these discussions to a successful conclusion, so that the entry into force of the CTBT is not delayed beyond September 1999. We expect that other countries, as indicated in Article XIV of the CTBT, will adhere to this Treaty without conditions".

Government has also stated that for the successful conclusion of the talks the creation of a positive environment by our interlocutors is a necessary ingredient.

चीन के सन्दर्भ में मंत्री जी की टिप्पणियां

*51. **श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र:** क्या विदेश मंत्री बताने कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान दिनांक 3 जनवरी, 1999 के "दि हिन्दू" में "मिनिस्टर्स कॉमेंट इरिस्पांसिब्ल: चाईना" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री जसवंन्त सिंह): (क) जी हां।

(ख) "चीन गणराज्य" के साथ भारत के सरकारी अथवा राजनयिक संबंध नहीं है। हमारे नीतिगत स्वरूप के भीतर सरकार व्यापार, पर्यटन और निवेश संवर्धन के लिए ताईवान के साथ गए — सरकारी आर्थिक, व्यापारिक और सांस्कृतिक सम्पर्कों को बढ़ावा देती है।

Change in the base year for calculating macro-parameters

*52. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) has revised the base year from 1980-81 to 1993-94 for calculation of macro-parameters such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross Domestic Savings (GDS) rate, etc.;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as a result of this revision, a lot of uncertainity has been created about the